

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (previously presented) A method of preparing microparticles, comprising: (a) preparing a first phase, said first phase comprising a solvent, active agent and a polymer; (b) preparing a second phase comprising a solvent; (c) passing said first phase and said second phase through a packed bed apparatus under laminar flow conditions, wherein the packed bed apparatus contains a packing material selected from the group consisting of metal, ceramic, plastic and glass, and wherein the packing material is spherical beads ranging in size from 20 to 1000 μm , and wherein said method results in the formation of microparticles; and (d) collecting said microparticles containing said active agent.
2. (canceled).
3. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said packing material is selected from the group consisting of glass and stainless steel.
4. (canceled).
5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said first phase comprising a solvent is selected from the group consisting of an organic solvent and water.
6. (original) The method of claim 5, wherein said organic solvent is selected from the group consisting of methylene chloride, chloroform, ethyl acetate, benzyl alcohol, diethyl carbonate and methyl ethyl ketone.
7. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said second phase comprising a solvent is selected from the group consisting of an organic solvent and water.

8. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein said solvent is water.
9. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said second phase further comprises an emulsion stabilizer.
10. (original) The method of claim 9, wherein said emulsion stabilizer is selected from the group consisting of poly(vinyl alcohol), polysorbate, protein and poly(vinyl pyrrolidone).
11. (original) The method of claim 10, wherein said protein is albumin.
12. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said second phase further comprises a second solvent.
13. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein said solvent is selected from the group consisting of an organic solvent and water.
14. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said active agent is selected from the group consisting of antioxidants, porosity enhancers, solvents, salts, cosmetics, food additives, textile-chemicals, agro-chemicals, plasticizers, stabilizers, pigments, opacifiers, adhesives, pesticides, fragrances, antifoulants, dyes, salts, oils, inks, cosmetics, catalysts, detergents, curing agents, flavors, foods, fuels, herbicides, metals, paints, photographic agents, biocides, pigments, plasticizers, propellants, solvents, stabilizers, polymer additives, an organic molecule, an inorganic molecule, antiinfectives, cytotoxics, antihypertensives, antifungal agents, antipsychotics, antibodies, proteins, peptides, antidiabetic agents, immune stimulants, immune suppressants, antibiotics, antivirals, anticonvulsants, antihistamines, cardiovascular agents, anticoagulants, hormones, antimalarials, analgesics, anesthetics, nucleic acids, steroids,

aptamers, hormones, steroids, blood clotting factors, hemopoietic factors, cytokines, interleukins, colony stimulating factors, growth factors, growth factor analogs and fragments thereof.

15. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said polymer is selected from the group consisting of poly(d,l-lactic acid), poly(l-lactic acid), poly(glycolic acid), copolymers of the foregoing including poly(d,l-lactide-co-glycolide) (PLGA), poly(caprolactone), poly(orthoesters), poly(acetals) and poly(hydroxybutyrate).

16. (withdrawn-previously presented) A method of preparing microparticles, comprising: (a) preparing a first phase, said first phase comprising a solvent and an active agent; (b) preparing a second phase comprising a solvent and a polymer; (c) preparing a third phase containing a solvent; (d) combining said first phase and said second phase to create an emulsion; (e) passing said emulsion through a packed bed apparatus under laminar flow conditions with said third phase, wherein the packed bed apparatus contains a packing material selected from the group consisting of metal, ceramic, plastic and glass, and wherein the packing material is spherical beads ranging in size from 20 to 1000 μm , and wherein said method results in the formation of microparticles; and (f) collecting said microparticles containing said active agent.

17. (canceled).

18. (canceled)

19. (withdrawn-previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein said packing material is selected from the group consisting of glass and stainless steel.

20. (withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein said first phase comprising a solvent is selected from the group consisting of an organic solvent and water.

21. (withdrawn) The method of claim 20, wherein said first phase includes a water-based solution.
22. (withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein said second phase comprising a solvent is selected from the group consisting of an organic solvent and water and wherein said third phase comprising a solvent is selected from the group consisting of an organic solvent and water.
23. (withdrawn) The method of claim 22, wherein said solvent is an organic solvent.
24. (withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein said first phase further comprises an emulsion stabilizer.
25. (withdrawn) The method of claim 24, wherein said emulsion stabilizer is selected from the group consisting of poly(vinyl alcohol), polysorbate, protein and poly(vinyl pyrrolidone).
26. (withdrawn) The method of claim 25, wherein said protein is albumin.
27. (withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein said second phase further comprises a second solvent.
28. (withdrawn) The method of claim 27, wherein said solvent is selected from the group consisting of an organic solvent and water.
29. (withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein said active agent is selected from the group consisting of antioxidants, porosity enhancers, solvents, salts, cosmetics, food additives, textile-chemicals, agro-chemicals, plasticizers, stabilizers, pigments, opacifiers, adhesives, pesticides, fragrances, antifoulants, dyes, salts, oils, inks, cosmetics, catalysts, detergents, curing agents, flavors, foods, fuels, herbicides, metals, paints, photographic agents, biocides, pigments,

plasticizers, propellants, solvents, stabilizers, polymer additives, an organic molecule, an inorganic molecule, antiinfectives, cytotoxics, antihypertensives, antifungal agents, antipsychotics, antibodies, proteins, peptides, antidiabetic agents, immune stimulants, immune suppressants, antibiotics, antivirals, anticonvulsants, antihistamines, cardiovascular agents, anticoagulants, hormones, antimalarials, analgesics, anesthetics, nucleic acids, steroids, aptamers, hormones, steroids, blood clotting factors, hemopoietic factors, cytokines, interleukins, colony stimulating factors, growth factors, growth factor analogs and fragments thereof.

30. (withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein said polymer is selected from the group consisting of poly(d,l-lactic acid), poly(l-lactic acid), poly(glycolic acid), copolymers of the foregoing including poly(d,l-lactide-co-glycolide) (PLGA), poly(caprolactone), poly(orthoesters), poly(acetals) and poly(hydroxybutyrate).

31. (withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein said first phase and said second phase create an emulsion in an apparatus selected from the group consisting of a packed bed apparatus, a mixer, a sonicator, a vortexer and a homogenizer.

32-41. (canceled).

42. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein said packing material is glass.